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BCLS Commencement

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BCLS Commencement

5/25/01--In an address to the Boston College Law School class of 2001, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Margaret H. Marshall stressed the importance of promoting justice and serving the community. Her commencement address focused upon the significance of public service, a tradition at Boston College Law School that is a central part of the school's Jesuit heritage.

Chief Justice Marshall also spoke of "lawyering for the real world," a reference to the balancing act of making a career in law while pursuing the ultimate goal of equal justice for everyone in society.

BCLS Dean John H. Garvey praised Chief Justice Marshall's dedication and commitment, particularly her "incredible skills" as an advocate and a jurist. "We teach our students that service to society and service to the profession are important parts of an attorney's mission," Dean Garvey said. "Chief Justice Marshall's distinguished career is a testament to those twin goals."

Two hundred and sixty-two graduates received degrees at the Law School's 69th Commencement exercises. Receiving the school's highest awards, the Founders' Medals, were Robert H. Smith, former Associate Dean and Professor of Law at BCLS, and Dr. Frank Campanella, Executive Vice President of Boston College. Commencement speaker Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall also received a Founders' Medal.



The Founder's Medal is the highest honor bestowed by the Law School. The Medal is named after the Reverend John B. Creedon, S.J. who was instrumental in founding the Law School in 1929 and whose dedication to academic excellence and professionalism was the inspiration for the Founder's Medal. Recipients of the Founder's Medal embody the traditions of professionalism, scholarship and service which the Law School seeks to instill in its students.

Dean Garvey, presiding over his second Commencement as Dean of Boston College Law School, advised the graduates to consider a line from Cicero, writing to his son Marcus: "We are not born of ourselves alone." He

went on to discuss the importance of living with a higher purpose. "You are an exceptionally intelligent, energetic, and well-educated group, and I expect that successes will crown your efforts," Dean Garvey said. "But you must not make it your target. Money, honor, office, power they may come your way, and it's fine if they do. But they will not make you a better or happier person, and they will not save your soul. Love God, love the least of your neighbors, and do justice."

Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall has distinguished herself during her long career as a leader in the law community. A native of South Africa, Chief Justice Marshall graduated from Witwaterstrand University in Johannesburg in 1966 before pursuing her master's degree in education from Harvard in 1969. Chief Justice Marshall then went on to receive her J.D. from Yale Law School in 1976 before working as partner in Csapler & Bok and then later as partner

in the firm of Choate, Hall & Stewart. Her long list of accomplishments also includes President of the Boston Bar Association in 1991, recipient of the American Bar Association's Margaret Brent Award, and Vice President and General Counsel of Harvard University.

In 1996, Margaret Marshall was appointed as an Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court before being named Chief Justice of the same court just three years later by Governor Paul Cellucci. It is most notable that Chief Justice Marshall is the first female chief justice in the state supreme court's 300 year history.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court is the oldest appellate court in continuous existence in the Western Hemisphere. It has jurisdiction over appeals from the departments of the Trial Court. The Massachusetts Constitution also gives the Supreme Judicial Court general superintendence authority over the entire Massachusetts Court System and all attorneys.

Boston College Law School opened in 1929 in a small downtown Boston office building with 54 students and two full-time faculty members. Currently ranked 22nd in the country among 174 accredited law schools by the annual US News & World Report survey, the law schools highly qualified students are drawn from more than 230 colleges and universities across the United States, as well as in other countries. More than 5,600 applicants each year compete for 270 seats in the entering class. The law schools 9,200 alumni practice in 49 states and several foreign countries, holding positions in major law firms, corporate in-house legal departments, the judiciary, government agencies, private industry, academic and public interest organizations, and serving as elected state legislators and members of the U.S. Congress.